Community Scholarships

Program Guidebook!

Community Foundation
OF SOUTHWEST INDIANA



cfswi.org/students

Table of Contents

02 Table of Contents

03 Community Scholarships Program

04 Ready to Apply?

05 Prepare & Gather Your Materials

06 Application Requirements

07 Accessing the Online Scholarship Portal

08 After You’ve Applied

09 Scholarship Important Dates

10 How are we able to support local students?

11 Questions? Get Connected!



Community Scholarships Program

Many of our donors have honored their loved ones, communities, high schools, colleges, or professions by endowing scholarship opportunities through their local Community Foundation. Together, these scholarships make up our Community Scholarships Program. This program is designed to support an array of students pursuing different levels of education across Southwest Indiana and in select areas of Illinois and Kentucky. After applying to our Community Scholarships Common Application, you will be matched with the scholarships you're eligible for.

Program Highlights

- **Wide Range of Awards:** Hundreds of scholarships for graduating seniors across Southwest Indiana and select areas of Illinois and Kentucky.
- **Simple Application Process:** Scholarships can be completed through our online Community Scholarships Common Application.
- **Pay special attention to our off-cycle and outside scholarships that require a separate application.**
- **Deadline:** Applications are open January 1, 2027, and close February 1, 2027.

Start your application early!

All supplemental materials must be submitted by the deadline, so build in plenty of time for each step. Give your references time to complete their recommendations, allow yourself enough time to write thoughtful essays, and request your transcripts early so your Guidance Counselor has time to process them.



200+ Scholarship Opportunities

Ready to Apply?

Community Scholarship Program

1

Get Started

Visit our website: cfswi.org/students.

2

Review the Guidebook

Fully Review the Community Scholarship Program Guidebook. You're already on the right track!

3

Find Your Community

Browse our scholarship opportunities using the community filter (where you live or attend school).

4

Review Opportunities

Review all available scholarship opportunities and their eligibility criteria for your community.

5

Complete Your Common Application

Complete the Community Scholarships Common Application through our online portal.

6

Get Matched with Eligble Opportunities

Receive your automatic matches to scholarships you qualify for and complete additional requirements.

7

Review & Proofread

Proofread your application. Once you've submitted your materials, you cannot make changes.

8

Submit Your Application

Ensure all required materials, including letters of recommendation and transcripts, are submitted by February 1, 2027, at 11:59 p.m.

Prepare & Gather Your Materials

Basic Information

- Applicant Information
- High School Information
- Academic History
- Extracurricular, School, and Community Activities
- Guidance Counselor Contact Information
- College/University Information
- Parent/Guardian Information
- Personal Statement
- Personal References Contact Information

Financial Information

While the FAFSA or Federal Student Aid Estimator may not be required for every scholarship, all students are required to complete one of them.

Some scholarships consider financial need as part of the selection process, and having this information ensures applicants are matched as accurately as possible to the opportunities they're eligible for.

Supplemental Requirements

Each application requires different materials. You can find the details in the Supplemental Requirements section of each scholarship description. **These must be submitted by February 1, 2027, at 11:59 p.m.**

Examples of supplemental requirements:

- Transcript
- Essays
- Certifications
- Letters of Recommendation



Application Requirements

The eligibility criteria for each available scholarship have been thoughtfully established by the scholarship fund's founders. We strongly encourage applicants to thoroughly review the specific eligibility, selection criteria, and any supplemental requirements listed in each scholarship description.

Specific Eligibility

The specific requirements or qualifications that an applicant must meet to be considered eligible for a scholarship opportunity.

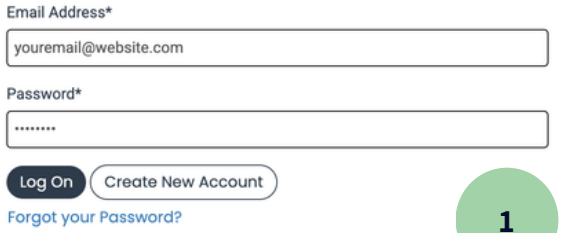
Selection Criteria

The essential skills, qualifications, knowledge, and experience required for an applicant to be considered for a scholarship. These specific criteria are used to evaluate applicants and are scored during the selection process.

Supplemental Requirements

The required accompanying documents to apply for a scholarship opportunity.

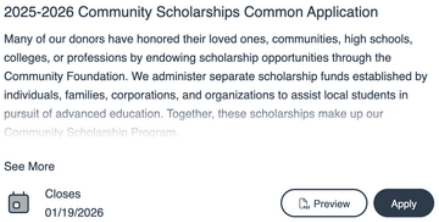
Accessing the Online Scholarship Portal



1

Create an Account or Log in

New Users: Select **Create New Account** and complete all required information.
Returning Users: Log in using your email and password.



2

Access the Common Application

Once logged in, locate the **Community Scholarships Common Application** box and click **Apply**.

To access off-cycle scholarships, select the box on the left and input the scholarship access code.



3

Verify Contact Information

Under **Contact Info**, confirm that all information is complete and correct. To edit, select the pencil icon, make changes, and save.

4

Complete the Common Application

Fill in all sections and answer all questions marked with an asterisk.

5

Submit Your Common Application

Carefully read all text before clicking **Submit**. You will receive a confirmation email.

6

Complete Your Eligible Scholarship Opportunities

Once you click **Submit**, you'll see a page listing scholarships you're eligible for. Scholarships will be organized into categories: **Action Needed, No Action, and Completed**

- Click on each scholarship in the **Action Needed** section to request letters of recommendation, write essays, or submit other required documents.
- Click **Save** to hold your answers and return later.
- You must click **Submit** at the bottom of each scholarship for it to be complete.
- If only the Common Application appears, you are not currently eligible, and you will receive a message confirming that you did not qualify. If you believe you should be eligible, please contact your local Community Foundation.

After You've Applied

EVALUATION

A diverse Scholarship Committee will carefully review all scholarship applications using a consistent, equitable scoring rubric.

Each committee is committed to a fair and impartial selection process. Any potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed, reviewed, and appropriately addressed to ensure the integrity of the process.

SELECTION

The rubric scores will then be used to identify the most qualified recipients.

These recipients will be recommended to move forward.

APPROVAL

Selected recipients will be submitted for final approval to the Community Foundation of Southwest Indiana Board of Directors. Once approved, recipients will be notified of their selection via email.

FORMAL LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

Along with the email notification, recipients will be required to complete an Acceptance and College Selection Form.

These forms must be submitted through the scholarship portal by May 1.



Scholarship *Important Dates!*

Use the empty sections as a tool to help you stay organized while applying to scholarship opportunities.

1 JAN	Community Scholarship Program Applications Open	
1 FEB	Community Scholarship Program Applications Close	
30 APRIL	Community Scholarship Program Recipients Notified	
01 MAY	Acceptance and College Selection Form Deadline	

Notes

How are we able to support local students?

Our Community Scholarships Program is made possible by the generous Scholarship Fund's founders. These members of the Southwest Indiana community believe in investing in education to advance the next generation.

When a Scholarship Fund is created at the Community Foundation of Southwest Indiana, resources are provided to students based on the selection criteria that matter most to our donors. These funds leave a legacy that enriches our community for generations.

Scholarship Funds honor loved ones, assist specific student populations, and encourage students to pursue different fields of study.

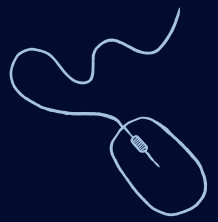
Learn More

To learn more, contact Aimee Stachura, Chief Development Officer, at astachura@cfswi.org.



Personalized & Expert Service

Our experienced staff work with donors to capture their vision for a scholarship purpose and their educational priorities. We manage the details and administrative paperwork to ensure scholarships are awarded on time, in compliance with all applicable regulations, and in accordance with donors' charitable wishes.



Easy & Accessible for Students

Our online application portal allows students to apply for all eligible scholarships. Our team works with the scholarship selection committees to ensure the awards reach the students they are designed to assist.

Questions
Get Connected

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GOOD LUCK!